

# Outdoor Rec / Local

## USFS's proposed Eagle Creek purchase

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Harvey explained at the start of the meeting that it would be just an informal, question-and-answer session, and the agenda items would be discussed in order, if there was enough time.

Montoya discussed the proposed Hells Canyon Snake River user fee, saying that, if implemented, it would probably be from \$5 to \$10, per user, per trip. He said that this proposal was developed this summer, with the help of the combined USFS/Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Snake River/John Day Resource Advisory Committee (RAC), in part because river users had commented about the need for more maintenance, and USFS presence.

Montoya said a series of meetings were held, including in Boise, Clarkston, and Riggins, Idaho, and the public provided guidance regarding the structure of the proposed fee. He said the comment period on the proposal has been extended through September 30, 2016, and no decision has been made yet. He said that the Snake River is the only major river without this type of fee implemented.

Harvey expressed concern about the possibility of the fee discouraging users from using the river, and Bennett, also expressing concern, suggested that the proposed fee, if implemented, could be re-evaluated within a reasonable period of time—two years, for example, instead of a longer period—to determine the impacts on tourism.

Montoya said that the fee could be reevaluated, and adjusted. He gave an example of that in Idaho, where a fee had been implemented, and when projects were completed, the USFS then reduced the fee.

Danser asked, “The user fee that you’re proposing, is that inclusive to those that are boating on the river, or, does that include people utilizing access on the shore?” Montoya said that the fee is primarily aimed at boaters on the river.

Wanda said, “I would hate to think that I’m the only one that objects to any user fees...whether it’s for boating, or hiking...I totally object...”

Chase asked, “What do these fees pay for?” Montoya said that the USFS experiences budget shortfalls, and that the fees fund projects for the benefit of river users.

Tork said, “I don’t agree with the fee, also—any fee, \$5, \$10...Ten dollars for every person, I think, is overwhelming...”

Chary asked, “Where would this fee be collected?” Montoya said that the fee would be collected at one of the launch sites.

Harvey began a discussion about a proposed USFS land purchase, located inside the Wild and Scenic River corridor of Eagle Creek, and East Eagle Creek, two separate tracts totaling about 388 acres, through the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 2018. The property, according to a letter of intent sent to Harvey, from Montoya, is currently owned by The Collins Pine Company. The property is described as the following: Ref. No. 5605, Map No. 06S45, Tax Lot 400; Ref. No. 11836, Map No. 06S44, Tax Lot 500; Ref. No. 12063, Map No. 07S44, Tax Lot 300; and Ref. No. 12064, Map No. 07S44, Tax Lot 400.

Livingston explained the purpose for the proposal, and she said that the USFS already owns the mineral rights. She said that the USFS is interested in the property, because it’s located within the protected corridor, and each year, projects which would benefit USFS management of lands are determined.

In his letter, Montoya said that, “Acquisition efficiencies realized through this acquisition include: minimized fragmentation and development impacts on significant scenic, recreation, and wildlife resources; reduction of approximately 8 miles of boundary management and maintenance; increased management efficiencies through consolidation of ownership for landscape level invasive species reduction, fuel treatments and fire suppression; increased efficiency by removing the chance of encroachments on the forest, and public trespass on the private lands.”

Livingston said that Collins Pine Company has done an excellent job with management of the property, but that the USFS would like to see it protected, through this acquisition. She said, at this time, it’s only a proposal, and that she’s not certain that the project would be fully funded in 2018.

Harvey commented that it appears that Collins Pine has managed the property well, including fire suppression, and when he asked Livingston about any issues with landowner management in that area, she said that she had heard of none. He said that the term “protected” is used too much.

Bennett asked about the likelihood of funding, and Livingston said that funding is likely, at least regionally. Harvey also expressed concern about the likelihood of funding for the project. Kerns stated concerns about the change in ownership, fire protection costs, and the loss in tax revenue for the County. Harvey echoed those sentiments.

Bennett said that he respects the right of private landowners to sell property, but this is a special

case, and community members have necessarily shown interest in the outcome. He asked about the letter Montoya sent, in which Montoya asked for a letter from the County, in support of the project, and Montoya said the USFS always does this as a courtesy, to inform the County, though the letter of support isn’t needed. Harvey said he appreciates the opportunity to discuss issues such as this one, since it affects members of the community, and Bennett said the meeting provides a forum for those members to voice their opinions.

Public response to the topic included comments from Edge, who said, “Mr. Montoya said that their motivation for buying this property is, they want to comply with the dictates of Congress...I find that interesting...recently, Greg Walden had a speech, before Congress...and he took great issues with the BLM, and the Forest Service, for that very reason...He stated that these agencies have not been following the intent of the legislation... It’s my understanding that government agencies... cannot directly buy private property. I’m kind of confused...”

Montoya said that the U.S. Congress does give authority to the federal government, to purchase property, for example, in corridors such as where this property is located. Livingston said that similar properties have been purchased, under different authorities, which allow the purchase of land outright.

Chase said, “There’s been a big erosion from our tax base, here in Baker County, and it’s led to a lot of problems...Every time I see the Forest Service take on a piece of property, I guess I’m just waiting for another match (he referenced mismanagement and wildfires)...”

Chary said, “I don’t understand why the Forest Service needs more land... Collins has been managing it... No matter who owns it, it will be managed.”

Harvey said that he’s concerned greatly, from a management standpoint. He said that the USFS’s management guidelines are more restrictive than the Oregon Department of Forestry’s (ODF), for example. He said that the Collins Pine Company logged 200 trucks’ worth of timber from the property, with still more possible, and that the USFS’s standards would not allow anything close to that. Harvey said that he’s greatly concerned that the USFS would consider “locking it up,” a term he stated he used purposely.

Rusti said, “My big concern is your management goal...” She spoke about the lack of proper maintenance, regarding roads and trails, by the USFS. She said that she hasn’t seen the USFS pick up any trash, and, “I really struggle with your com-

ment that you’re going to maintain it, and make it better...You don’t maintain your campgrounds...”

Rusti asked about the funding to maintain the property, and Montoya responded that the funding would come from the U.S. Congress. He said he understands her concerns, and he said the employees have to prioritize items, and they do the best they can, with the funding and the time they have.

Stroy said, “I would encourage them (the Collins Pine Company) to sell privately...We’ve had, what, five forest supervisors in the last ten years? Every one of them buys property; they can’t take care of this, they can’t take care of that...I’m just totally against them (the USFS) buying any more private property.”

Tomac said he understands some of the comments made, and he encouraged the public to speak with him about the cited lack in maintenance, and the issues with the trails, campgrounds, etc.

Harlan, Resources Vice President at The Collins Pine Company, said, “Collins has owned the property for a long time... We are at a place, company-wise, where we need to take a look at redeploying our assets...We’ve suffered a fire, at least 24,000 acres of timber land...Everybody up there’s been great to work with—both the agencies, and private landowners...We understand the issues, of public versus private ownership...We understand, and we don’t take this lightly. As I said, we are looking at selling it... We have some ideas about management...We look to do right by the property, and the community, and County.”

Further discussion included comments from Mike, who said, “This isn’t a done deal; the Forest Service is merely looking at it...My suggestion is that Baker County, and the local communities adjacent approach Collins Pine... and we make them an offer, and we preserve it for the future, for our County, communities...I can’t help but think that if we put something out in the newspaper, that mentions this property could be sold to the federal government, people would stand up and say, ‘I want to buy a share into that...’”

Mike asked whether those in attendance support the sale or not, and Harvey said that he could not ask for an “official” vote, but that he would ask for an “unofficial” vote, out of curiosity. The majority voted in opposition.

Bennett said he respects Collins Pine Company as a private business, and he appreciates that Collins brought the issue to the Board and to the public, though he also declined to show support for the proposed sale to the USFS.

## Wilderness medical training offered

Eastern Oregon’s leading provider of career technical education is bringing critical first responder training to Bend.

This October, outdoor educators, guides, search and rescue members, and others who work and play in remote areas can get Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification in Bend taught by expert instructors from Baker Technical Institute. The WFR course is scheduled for October 3rd-7th in Bend.

In partnership with Wilderness Medical Associates International (WMA), a leader in wilderness medical education since 1981, the 5-day curriculum is comprehensive and practical and includes all the essential principles and skills required to assess and manage medical problems in isolated and extreme environments.

Course instructors include BTI’s Dr. Kaare Tingelstad, a physician who has trained EMS agencies, wilderness guides and fellow medical professionals from around the globe to care for patients who have sustained injuries or illness in remote situations, and Adam Kaplan, a physician assistant specializing in wilderness, emergency and remote medicine whose medical assignments have included Alaska’s North Slope. Kaplan, who resides and works in Bend is the newest addition to the wilderness medicine instructional staff at BTI. “We are excited to have Adam on our staff. Not only is he highly trained in the area of remote emergency management, but he also lives the outdoor lifestyle that makes his teaching much more relevant to students”, says Doug Dalton, BTI President.

Classes like Wilderness First Responder are offered as part of BTI’s health services career program designed to advance the skills of a particular workforce but are also aimed at learners interested in pursuing a career in healthcare, or for those simply wanting the skillsets for an adventurous lifestyle.

“Interest for advanced emergency response medical skills in a remote setting continues to be in high demand, not only in Bend but across our region, which is why we are intently focused on expanding BTI’s offerings in this area,” said Kevin Cassidy, Baker Technical Institute board member. “Future courses are planned across the Pacific Northwest that range from Wilderness First Aid to Wilderness Advanced Life Support.”

The cost for the course is \$700 and includes course materials. Deadline to register is September 23rd. Pre-coursework is required, and enrollment is limited to 21 students. For more information or to register for the course, call Baker Technical Institute at 541-403-1900.

About Baker Technical Institute: Baker Technical Institute (BTI) is a leading provider of Career Technical Education programs focused on developing the next generation of skilled workers, technology innovators, entrepreneurs, and community leaders in rural communities. Headquartered in Baker City, Oregon, BTI offers cutting-edge education and training, leading to certification in high-salary, high-demand careers, such as agriculture sciences, building trades, natural resources/environmental sciences, engineering, health services, welding, and manufacturing. For more information, go to bakerti.org.

## Symphony to hold auction

The eleventh Annual Benefit Auction of the Grande Ronde Symphony Association promises to be a memorable event! Entitled An Evening with Spain - A Tribute to Lorna, this year’s event will be held on Friday, September 24th from 6:00 to 8:45 p.m. at the Presbyterian Friendship Center, 1204 Spring Street, La Grande. “We are delighted to dedicate this year’s benefit auction to Lorna Spain, a long-time supporter of the orchestra,” says Anna Cavinato, chair of the organizing committee. “Lorna has been a staple for the Grande Ronde Symphony Association as a Board Member and as its president from 2005 to 2012 and her tireless efforts to support the organization will be greatly missed.” Lorna, who was named Honorary Lifetime President in 2011, will move to the west side of the state to be closer to her children but her legacy will live on through the many contributions she has made to the GRSA over the years.

Tickets are \$35 each and they can be purchased from any of the GRSA Board of Directors, at Direct Music Source, 1206 Adams Avenue in La Grande; at Betty’s Books, 1813 Main Street in Baker City; or on our newly redesigned website at granderondesymphony.org. A limited number of tickets, if available, may be purchased at the door.

For further information or to donate an auction item contact Anna Cavinato at 541-786-5769 or at acavinat@eou.edu.

## Rail Fire grows

At the time of print, the Rail Fire outside Unity had grown to nearly 41,000 acres and was 70% contained. Personnel: 920; Resources: 22 Crews, 27 Engines, 6 Dozers, 34 Water tenders, 1 Masticator, 5 Skidders/Skidgins. Aircraft: 4 Type 1 heavy helicopters; 1 Type 2 medium helicopter; 2 Type 3 light helicopters; and 2 Single Engine Air Tankers.

Because of the stability of the fire and containment progress, Prairie City District Ranger Gregg Moon is pleased to announce that Forest Road 13 was opening to the public for firewood gathering on September 1 at 6:00 a.m.

## Ladies golf and bridge scores

The Ladies Quail Ridge Golf and Bridge scores for August 24, 2016 are as follow:

Golf Winners:  
1st Flight Myrna Evans;  
2nd Flight TIE Linda Taylor/Kathy Hopkins; 3rd

Flight Carol Irvine.  
Birdies: Virginia Babski  
Bridge Winners:  
1st Mary Jean Henry;  
2nd Kathy Eidson; 3rd Shannon Sullivan  
9 week Winners:  
1st Della Steele;

2nd Kathy Eidson;  
3rd Marlene Cross;  
4th Kitty Nichols;  
5th Carol Arnstein;  
6th Dianne Ellingson;  
7th Carman Ott;  
8th Tie Janice Smull/Joan Colton.

Those interested in learning more about ladies golf or bridge at Quail Ridge can contact Janice Smull at jsmull@q.com for more information.